

¹⁹ And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their own language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem- What had happened to Jesus of Nazareth spread like wildfire around Jerusalem. In addition to that, what happened to His betrayer Judas Iscariot also became known rapidly. This was important information, because they would not have wanted to make themselves unclean by entering a Gentile cemetery. Since Jesus was regarded as a holy man by many, they also would not want anything to do with where a cursed man who betrayed Him had died.

So that the field was called in their own language- Akeldama is Aramaic, which is slightly different from Hebrew. They both belong to a family of Semitic languages. Aramaic was the spoken language of the common people, while Hebrew was primarily a written language that was much more formal, used for the Scriptures, government, and the upper classes. In Israel today, they primarily speak Hebrew, but there are small minorities that still speak Aramaic.

Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood- We may wonder "whose blood?" Jesus' blood or Judas' blood? If Judas committed suicide in this field, as may have been described, it makes some sense for it to be his blood. But in actuality, this field was named for the blood money taken by Judas to betray Jesus.

²⁰ "For it is written in the Book of Psalms, "'May his camp become desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it'; and "'Let another take his office.'

For it is written in the Book of Psalms- these references come from Psalm 109, written by David. This Psalm is known for containing some of the most severe curses in the Bible, intended for enemies of God and God's people. David is praying for deliverance from His enemies, not knowing that God would also deliver His people from their enemies by sending Jesus the Messiah. Although he had appeared to be a friend, Judas was ultimately found to be one of those enemies.

May his camp become desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it- When the camp was full of soldiers, David's enemies appeared formidable, but if everybody left, how pathetic would they look? Judas may have thought that he had many people on his side as he was starting out, but everybody abandons him. The religious leaders want nothing to do with him and basically tell him to go away. And of course, the disciples would have had a very hard time accepting him back after what happened. How sad and pathetic Judas was at the very end.

Let another take his office- This is one of the curses that was pronounced upon God's enemies: that they would be replaced after leaving in shame and disgrace. In David's day, this might have referred to an enemy king on his throne, but in Judas' case, this refers to his office as an apostle. Being an apostle could have continued to be the highest honor of Judas' life, but now that honor would go to somebody else.

²¹ So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,

So one of the men- When thinking about replacing Judas, the apostles select from the 120, but they specifically look for men to become an apostle. The apostolic office is a precursor to the pastoral office that we have today. In the LCMS, we believe that men should be the pastors. This is based on something called "the order of creation." Going back to Adam and Eve, God created men to be the spiritual head of their household. The church reflects that same ordering on a bigger scale. That is not to say that women are incapable or that they are inferior or that men should oppress women. Men and women are different and that is a great thing. God created men and women to complement each other.

Who have accompanied us- This again refers to the 120 people who composed the group of Jesus' followers. They would have seen the vast majority of Jesus' miracles and teachings, except for the things Jesus did and said in private, with only Peter, James, and John present

During all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us- In this case, "all the time" does mean "all." This was a strict requirement that excluded anybody who was a "Johnny-come-lately." When laying out the requirements for pastors, a similar requirement is given: must not be a recent convert. As Jesus talks about in the parable of the sower, it takes time for roots to form. Though it may spring up initially, their faith could wilt when challenged if they have no roots.